CITY OF WHITEHORSE

WHITEHORSE MUNICIPAL YOUTH PLAN 2014-2018

WHITEHORSE: A CITY FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE

Supporting young people aged 12-25 years living, working and studying in Whitehorse.

Acknowledgement of country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners of the land now known as Whitehorse and pays respect to its elders past and present.

Acknowledgement of contribution

The Whitehorse City Council acknowledges the extensive input and contribution to the development of this plan by a wide range of individuals and organisations.

In particular, Council acknowledges the value contribution to the plan made by community representatives, staff, councillors and key stakeholders through the consultation process.

The plan has been developed under the guidance and direction of the Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan Steering Committee.

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

It gives me great pleasure to present the third iteration of the Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan titled *Whitehorse – A City for all Young People.*

It is often said that communities shape their young people and young people shape their communities. I never cease to be amazed and impressed by the creativity, inspiration and imagination of our young people. The enthusiasm of youth, their passion and their hope for what can be achieved is often said to be the spark for invention and creativity. To provide young people with hope and to help and support them in their life journey, does in many ways define the type of community in which we live.

The years from 12 to 25 are commonly known as the transition years. The time in a person's life when he or she transitions from childhood to adulthood. It involves their search for identity and independence and the understanding of their uniqueness as a person. It is an exciting time in a person's life.

For most young people, the transition to adulthood, while having its challenges, is one that helps shape these important members of our community. For others, the journey is more difficult and the existence of additional support and encouragement can be of great value in helping them to achieve their potential.

The development of this plan is a very important body of work and one that provides a vision for Government, Council, service agencies and the community to work together to help and assist families support their young people. It is what strong, compassionate communities do!

The development of this plan has involved a tremendous amount of effort and I together with my fellow Councillors extend our appreciation to the contribution and commitment of all members of the Municipal Youth Plan Steering Committee. The committee consisted of Council officers from Council's Health & Family Services and Community Development Departments, representatives from Eastern Access Community Health, Family Access Network, Victoria Police, Eastern Health and members from the Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee.

It is with pleasure that on behalf of Council I present this plan to the Whitehorse community. Whitehorse is truly a city for all young people.

Cr Sharon Ellis
MAYOR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Whitehorse City Council is committed to supporting all young people who live, work and study in the City of Whitehorse to thrive and be their best and to access all opportunities to grow, learn and be an active part of their community.

We celebrate young people and the richness, vibrancy, innovation and creativity they contribute to our community.

Council recognises the importance of the formative years of a young person's life between 12 and 25 and how critical this period is to influencing their success, happiness and wellbeing throughout life. We know from experience and research that the years from childhood, through adolescence and on to becoming a young adult are crucial to the development of a young person's identity, sense of belonging, skills, knowledge and experience. These all shape a young person's wellbeing and capacity to live a healthy, active, full and enriching life.

Supporting young people to explore, experience and navigate the many challenges and opportunities present during this phase of their life is an important responsibility of the entire community. Creating an environment in which young people feel valued, respected and able to participate is essential in underpinning a strong community.

In developing the new Municipal Youth Plan, Council has engaged the community and key stakeholders widely and using a range of innovative techniques. Most significantly, the development of the plan involved engaging a large number of young people through other young people, including the Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee. Feedback captured through the engagement process has directly informed the new plan, together with an analysis of government policy, local demographic information and existing services available for young people in Whitehorse.

The Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan - *Whitehorse: A City for all Young People*, provides a clear direction for Council and its partners to continue working together to improve outcomes for young people aged 12-25 years who live, work and study in the City of Whitehorse. It aims to identify the most effective ways to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for young people and to develop an integrated approach to planning and service delivery throughout the municipality.

The name of the plan, *Whitehorse: A City for all Young People*, was born out of one of the key themes identified through the development of the plan – the importance of a community in which all young people are safe, welcome, included, respected and accepted regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, language, gender, sexuality, ability or socio economic status. A city for all young people incorporates:

- Healthy, resilient and engaged young people
- Secure families and relationships
- Employment, training and education opportunities
- Comprehensive services for all young people
- Safe, welcoming and inclusive community for all young people

These five key elements have been adopted as the pillars, or key directions, of Council's Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018 and are supported by 45 objectives and 98 actions. The plan identifies a strong vision for young people and a set of core principles that underpin the vision.

The strategies and actions contained within the plan will be developed into a comprehensive four year implementation plan containing specific actions, responsibilities, resources and time frames. In turn, annual operational plans will be prepared by Council staff working in partnership with key service delivery partners.

The implementation of the plan will be monitored by the Municipal Early Years Evaluation Committee on a six monthly basis. The committee will present a report on its findings to the Council at least annually.

The Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan has been prepared in conjunction with the Whitehorse Early Years Plan to provide a seamless strategy covering children and young people from birth to the age of 25.

Council is committed to ensuring that Whitehorse is a city for all young people.

OUR VISION FOR WHITEHORSE

Council Vision

The *Whitehorse Council Vision 2013-2023* outlines the long term aspirations of Councillors, community and staff of the City of Whitehorse. The outcomes of extensive consultation undertaken in 2012-13 are articulated in the following statement:

> *We aspire to be a healthy, vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community supported by strong leadership and community partnerships*

The City of Whitehorse will be:

- One of the most liveable and sustainable municipalities in Melbourne
- Recognised for the quality of its open space and natural environment
- A community rich in culture and diversity that is inclusive, healthy and vibrant
- A well governed city that has a healthy and strong relationship with the community
- A prosperous and well supported local economy

Mission

Whitehorse City Council, working in partnership with community to develop and grow our municipality through good governance, proactive strategic planning and advocacy, efficient, responsive services and quality infrastructure.

Values

In pursuing its goals, Whitehorse City Council is committed to the following values

- Consultation and Communication
- Democracy and Leadership
- Equity and Social Justice
- Integrity
- Openness and Accountability
- Sustainability
- Wellbeing

Strategic Directions

The aspirations outlined in the *Whitehorse Council Vision 2013-2023* are further underpinned in the following key strategic directions Whitehorse City Council commits to:

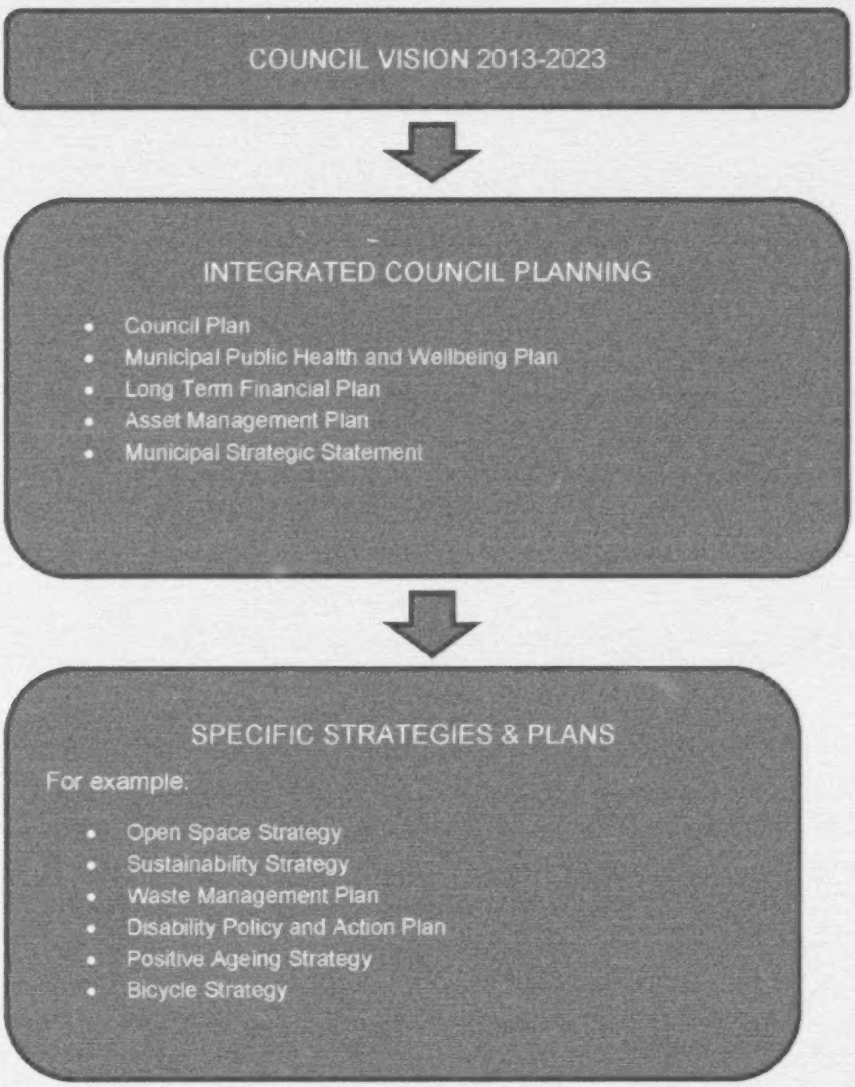
- Support a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and diverse community
- Maintain and enhance our built environment to ensure a liveable and sustainable city
- Protect and enhance our open space and natural environments
- Strategic leadership, partnership and open and accessible government

- Support a healthy local economy

These five strategic directions form the basis of Whitehorse's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, *Health and Wellbeing in Whitehorse 2013-2017.*

Council Planning Framework

The Council Planning framework details the relationships between various Council plans and strategies. As depicted in the diagram, Whitehorse Council have a strong commitment to health and wellbeing, with the Whitehorse Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan sitting alongside council's other high level strategic documents.



OUR VISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

The Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018, *A City for all Young People*, has a clear vision for young people living, working and studying in the City of Whitehorse.

All young people in the City of Whitehorse
have the opportunity to thrive and be their best:
to grow, develop, learn and be part of their community,
from childhood to adulthood,
regardless of ethnic origin, religion, language, gender,
sexuality, ability or socio-economic status.

Whitehorse is a City for all Young People.

PRINCIPLES TO SUPPORT THE VISION

The following principles underpin Council's vision for young people in Whitehorse:

- All young people are valued and respected.
- All young people are considered equal citizens in the City of Whitehorse, regardless of their age, background and abilities, and have equal access and opportunity to participate.
- All young people have the right to always feel safe – at home, in learning environments, at work, in service settings and throughout the wider community.
- Young people have the opportunity to be young people – to learn, to adventure and have fun, to experiment and test boundaries, to socialise and develop relationships, to explore their identity and to develop skills and experiences.
- All young people have the right to be accepted for who they are and fully participate in their community, with a strong sense of belonging and social inclusion.
- Young people and their families have the opportunity to access the services, supports and assistance they require to thrive.
- Young people have the opportunity, support and encouragement to live healthy and active lifestyles and achieve positive physical and mental wellbeing.
- Young people have the right to not be bullied.
- Young people are actively engaged, asked their opinion and have their opinions and contribution valued and respected.
- Families and caregivers are supported to provide the best environment, love, care and parenting possible.
- While all young people are supported universally, the Whitehorse community recognises and assists those most in need.
- The Whitehorse City Council has a diverse role in supporting young people and is committed to achieving the best outcomes possible within its jurisdiction, influence, resources and capacity.

The Whitehorse City Council is committed to the principles of a Child Friendly City, as identified by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).[1] Council acknowledges that these principles involve a continuous process of innovation, monitoring and improvement.

[1] See Appendix A for details about the UNICEF Child Friendly City model.

OUR YOUTH PLANNING JOURNEY

Previous youth plan

The Whitehorse City Council commenced the process of formal planning for improving outcomes for young people outcomes in 2005 and followed up in 2009, with the development of its second Municipal Youth Plan: *Thriving in Whitehorse Young People's Strategy 2009-2013.*

The second iteration of the Municipal Youth Plan aimed to set the strategic direction and activity of Council and its community in supporting young people aged 12 – 25 years, which dovetailed into Council's Municipal Early Years Plan, *Childhood Matters*, which focused on enhancing outcomes for children aged 0-12 years and their families.

Together, the early years and youth plans have aimed to provide seamless strategic direction for working with and supporting children and young people from 0-25 years and their families in Whitehorse.

The 2009 youth plan focused on five key indicators and provided a roadmap for all stakeholders in the City of Whitehorse to move ahead in improving supports for young people.

1. I'm respected
2. I belong
3. I like where I live
4. I like who I am
5. I have the opportunity to grow

The development of the 2009 plan involved an extensive strategic planning process, drawing on both research and consultation with the community, councillors, government representatives and other key stakeholders.

The 2009 plan recognised key standards from the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities model through an emphasis on young people's right to have a say, to make friends, to have stimulating spaces and to participate as an equal citizen of their city. While the plan did not recommend that Council seek to become a signatory to the UNICEF program, it provided a number of practical and aspirational goals and actions aimed at strengthening support for these principles.

Taking us forward – a new plan

Having completed the implementation of the 2009 plan, the Whitehorse City Council has developed this new Municipal Youth Plan.

The Municipal Youth Plan, *Whitehorse: A City for all Young People*, provides a clear road map for improving outcomes for young people living, working and studying in the City of Whitehorse over the four-year period 2014-2018.

It provides a whole of municipality strategic vision for young people in the City of Whitehorse and establishes a set of priority directions for improving key health and wellbeing outcomes and improving the service system. The plan is based on a philosophy and commitment to partnership between Council, other service providers, families and children.

The new plan builds on the success of the 2009 plan and draws on the extensive input of the Whitehorse community, Councillors, Council staff and key stakeholders in the region.

Development process

The development of the new Municipal Youth Plan involved an extensive process that included:

- Background research into current knowledge and best practice in relation to youth development and wellbeing.
- Assessment of government policy, funding and programs at federal, state and local levels.
- Analysis of demographic information relating to young people in the City of Whitehorse.
- Profiling and mapping of universal, secondary and tertiary services available in the City of Whitehorse to support young people.
- Consideration of outcomes and feedback from the community engagement process.

The Whitehorse City Council established the Municipal Youth Plan Steering Committee to provide guidance and direction for the development of the new plan. The group comprised staff from the Whitehorse City Council, EACH, Eastern Health, Victoria Police, Family Access Network and members of the Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee.

Community consultation

A key step in the development of the new Municipal Youth Plan has been the extensive community engagement process undertaken to capture community and stakeholder feedback in relation to improving outcomes for young people in the City of Whitehorse.

Council designed and implemented a far reaching and innovative program of consultation activities aimed at engaging a wide range of interested stakeholders.

A major highlight of the engagement process was the consultation process undertaken with a large number of young people through a range of innovative and interactive processes. Engaging young people through other young people, in particular through the Whitehorse Youth Representative

Committee, proved to be an extremely successful approach that provided Council with a comprehensive and robust process and volumes of valuable feedback.

The overarching aims of the community engagement process included:

- To engage and obtain feedback from young people who live, work and study in the City of Whitehorse.
- To engage and obtain feedback from a wide range of other stakeholders who have an interest in the wellbeing of young people in the City of Whitehorse.
- To better understand the needs of young people in the City of Whitehorse.
- To identify new and emerging issues facing young people in the City of Whitehorse.
- To identify practical initiatives that can be implemented by the Whitehorse City Council over a period of four years to improve outcomes for young people in the City of Whitehorse.
- To create an opportunity for everyone in the Whitehorse community to provide input to the development of the next Youth Plan.
- To ensure that the Youth Plan subsequently developed is robust and reflects input from the Whitehorse community and key stakeholders.

The consultation process sought to engage young people aged 12-25 who live, work and study in the City of Whitehorse, parents and caregivers, the wider City of Whitehorse community, community groups and organisations, Councillors, Council staff and senior management, youth service providers, Whitehorse Youth Issues Network, Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee, education providers and key State Government departments and agencies.

Consultation activities undertaken included:

Your Say Whitehorse	Introductory online community survey
Survey Monkey	Detailed community and key stakeholder online survey
Survey Monkey #2	Detailed Youth Survey for Young People Online Survey
Spring Festival	Vox Pop surveying of young people at Spring Fest
Public surveying	Vox Pop surveying of young people in key public places such as Box Hill Ce
Councillor workshop	Workshop with City of Whitehorse Councillors
Management team workshop	Workshop with City of Whitehorse senior management
Youth services staff workshop	Workshop with City of Whitehorse staff involved in the planning, delivery and coordination of youth services
Joint staff workshop	Workshop with City of Whitehorse staff from all departments
Youth Issues Network	Workshop with members of the Youth Issues Network

workshop	
Youth Representative Committee workshop	Workshop with members of the Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee
Youth Forum	Speak Out Loud Youth forum with young people from various schools in Whitehorse
Focus groups	Focus groups with Blackburn English Language School (BELS), Eastern Diversity Group (EDG) and Young Mum's Group
Road safety feedback	Feedback obtained from the Road Safety Strategy Consultations

Consultation activities were broadly publicised through the Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee, through the Whitehorse News and Leader Newspaper publications and via direct email to an extensive database of community groups, organisations and family and children's service providers.

A consistent set of discussion topics underpinned each of the different consultation activities, enabling consolidation of feedback and distillation of key themes. Key discussion topics and questions included the following. Each question was asked in a slightly different way, depending on the audience – adult or young person.

Positive attributes	What attributes currently make the City of Whitehorse a positive place for young people aged 12-25 living, working and studying in the municipality?
Positive changes	What positive changes have you noticed in the City of Whitehorse in the last few years that support better outcomes for young people aged 12-25?
Issues & challenges	What do you see as the key issues and challenges facing young people aged 12 -25 years living, working or studying in the City of Whitehorse?
Existing services	What services and supports for young people are you aware of in Whitehorse?
Service gaps	What gaps or deficiencies are you aware of in the services and supports available for young people aged 12 -25 years living, working or studying in the City of Whitehorse?
Ideas & priorities	What opportunities do you see to build on existing strengths in Whitehorse and improve the lives and wellbeing of young people aged 12 25 living, working or studying in the City of Whitehorse?
Partnerships	'What opportunities exist for partnership-based initiatives between Council and other service providers to improve outcomes for young people in the City of Whitehorse over coming years?

THE JOURNEY FROM CHILDHOOD TO ADULTHOOD

Young people are a central part of our community and make a strong contribution to the vibrancy, excitement, interest and creativity of society. We value and celebrate all young people and recognise their unique talents, skills and contributions to community.

The period of a young person's life between the ages 12 and 25 years can be busy, exciting, demanding and challenging. Over the course of this timeframe, most young people transition from primary into secondary school, gain their secondary education and then make the large transition from secondary school into post school education, training and / or employment. Many also make the transition from living a dependent life at home to living independently on their way to adulthood.

Young people experience rapid change over this period, with many new experiences, uncertainties and challenges along the way. It is a period in a young person's life when they explore and develop their own identity, experiment and test boundaries and take various risks.

By and large, it is a time of a person's life when they have a lot of fun.

While we know that the majority of young people successfully navigate their way through this exciting and challenging period of their life, we also know that many struggle along the way.

Some of the key issues and challenges faced by young people in the City of Whitehorse today include:

- Bullying - in all forms
- Mental health issues, in particular depression and anxiety
- Maintaining steady family and personal relationships and friendships
- Employment opportunities
- Alcohol and drug use
- Participation and engagement in community life and discussions
- Education
- Physical health and wellbeing, including nutrition
- Self harm
- Access to affordable housing
- Identity and fitting in
- Sexual health
- Social isolation
- Discrimination – in all forms

Ensuring that all young people have the opportunity to thrive and be their best and to access all opportunities to grow, learn and be an active part of their community is a major priority. It is critical to ensure that all young people feel safe, welcome and included in their community and have the opportunity to achieve their best through education and employment, while maintaining and healthy and active life.

We know that a person's experience in the formative years between 12-25 has a significant influence on their long-term health and wellbeing and capacity to enjoy a full, active and rewarding life to their full potential.

CITY OF WHITEHORSE: A GREAT PLACE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

It is widely recognised that the City of Whitehorse is a fantastic place for young people to live, work and study.

Members of the community and key stakeholders engaged in the development of the Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018 identified some of the key attributes that current make the City of Whitehorse such a positive place for young people.

These included:

Education & employment

- High quality public and private schools
- Box Hill Institute of TAFE
- Deakin University
- Part time employment opportunities
- Student accommodation
- Language schools

Services

- Wide range of accessible services for young people
- Concentration of services and supports, especially in Box Hill
- Support groups with young people with additional needs

Youth Services

- Youth Connexions

Facilities

- Aquatic centres
- Community Arts Centre
- Free public libraries
- Skate park

Activities & opportunities

- Range of activities to get involved in – sports, arts, dance, martial arts
- Youth events and activities
- Community festivals, events, markets and activities – in particular Spring Festival and Chinese New Year
- Arts and cultural activities
- Sporting and recreation opportunities, facilities, ovals and clubs
- Lots of opportunities for the community to engage
- Leadership opportunities for young people
- Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee

Community & environment

- Multicultural, diverse and welcoming community
- Healthy environment
- Parks, gardens and open spaces

- Excellent health facilities and services
- Restaurants

Accessibility

- Good public transport to major centres
- Proximity to the city and other locations
- Walking and off road cycling paths
- Shopping centres
- Proximity to the city and other locations
- Safe community and low crime rate
- Strong sense of community

COUNCIL'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE

The Whitehorse City Council organises and provides a wide range of services, activities and resources for young people and their families in Whitehorse.

Through its Youth Services unit, Council provides:

Youth Connexions

Youth Connexions is Council's youth information, support and referral centre based at Centro Box Hill Shopping Centre. The centre is open from 1pm-5pm each weekday and offers a comfortable and supportive environment for young people aged 12-25, to find information and seek assistance on a range of issues. Services are free and include:

- Computer, internet, phone, fax and photocopier
- Table tennis, pool table, games and a relaxing couch area
- Hot and cold drinks
- Music equipment and recording facilities (bookings are essential)
- Friendly youth workers to chat to
- Assistance with studying, homework, employment and resume writing
- Personal support
- Referrals to a range of services including accommodation, health and wellbeing, drug and alcohol workers, legal and financial support.

Youth Connexions maintains a Facebook page to connect with young people and provide information about the service – where it is located, how it operates and upcoming events.

Youth Representative Committee

The Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee (WYRC) is made up of young people who live, work or study in the City of Whitehorse. A new WYRC is formed each year to act as a voice for young people and to assist Council with youth issues. The WYRC is involved with a number of events throughout the year such as Youth Week.

Whitehorse Youth Services Directory

Council's youth services team has developed and maintains a directory of all youth related services in the City of Whitehorse. The free booklet features services such as housing, support, mental health and disability and is available in hard copy via Youth Connexions or online.

Youth events

The youth services team plans, coordinates and supports a wide range of events for young people. Council also coordinates a group of young people aged 12-24 years who come together to organise a range of youth events themselves.

One of the significant events is FreeZA, which is an innovative youth development program providing young people between the ages of 12 and 25 with the opportunity to attend affordable and accessible music and cultural events.

Youth Issues Network (YIN)

Whitehorse Youth Services facilitates the Whitehorse Youth Issues Network (YIN) providing the opportunity for youth service professionals in the area to meet and network with other services and organisations . Whitehorse YIN meetings are held bi-monthly at Council's Youth Drop In Centre, Youth Connexions with the agenda typically consisting of a guest speaker presenting on a service that may benefit young people or an issue that impacts on young people in Whitehorse.

Alongside the bi-monthly meetings, is an email distribution list which allows organisations to pass on information to other Youth Issues Network members. The Youth Issues Network also has a pool of funding available to be accessed by members. Programs are funded up to a maximum of $1500. To be eligible for the funding an organisation must meet the following criteria:

- The project/program will aim to be an initiative that aims to address unmet needs of young people/services.
- The project/program should aim to improve or enhance the lives of young people in the City of Whitehorse.
- Projects/programs should maximize resources by funding projects/programs or services that do not duplicate or overlap with existing services.

Whitehorse Homework Support Program (Cruzin' Study)

'Cruzin' Study' is a free program run in conjunction with the Whitehorse Regional Library Corporation which aims to assist young people who may have difficulty with their school work, particularly those from a migrant or refugee background. The program provides young people with access to:

- Professional tutors in a range of subjects including English, maths, science and humanities.
- Computers for research and writing.
- Printing and photocopying.

The program runs every Thursday afternoon during school terms from 4.30 – 6.30pm at the Box Hill Library.

In addition to providing these targeted services for young people, Council also provides a range of facilities, infrastructure, service and activities that benefit and support young people to thrive and be their best.

These include:

- Parks and gardens
- Open spaces
- Sporting ground and complexes
- Aquatic centres
- Libraries
- Roads
- Footpaths
- Walking tracks
- Cycling paths
- Skate parks
- Neighbourhood houses
- Community centres
- Lake
- Community festivals, events and programs
- Arts and cultural projects
- Volunteering programs and opportunities

The Whitehorse City Council also plays an important role in supporting young people through its leadership and sector development efforts and the advocacy it undertakes.

Council regularly advocates on behalf of the interests of young people to State and Federal Governments and other organisations, for example in relation to funding youth programs and initiatives.

WHITEHORSE COMMUNITY IN CONTEXT

The following provides a brief summary of some of the key demographic information relating to young people aged 12-25 years and their families in the City of Whitehorse. For more comprehensive information, refer to the demographics background report, available on Council's website.

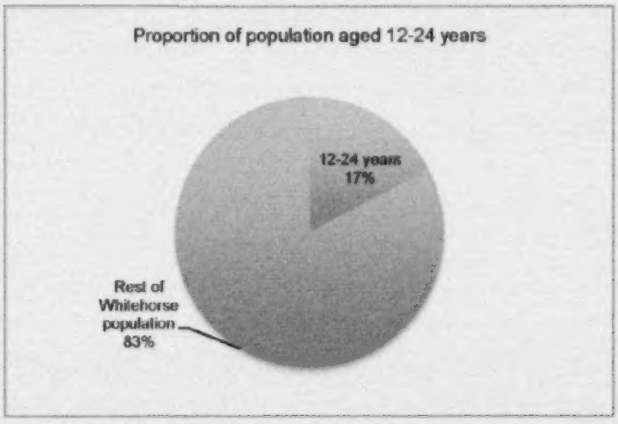
Location

The City of Whitehorse is located 12 -22km east of Melbourne CBD. The major features of the city include the large technology precinct in the Tally Ho area, the Melbourne campus of Deakin University, Box Hill TAFE, Box Hill Hospital. The three major activity centres are Box Hill, Forest Hill Chase and the Nunawading mega mile. Whitehorse also has several smaller neighbourhood shopping centres scattered around the municipality.

Population

The City of Whitehorse comprises a diverse community with an estimated resident population of 158,992 (2012).

Young people aged 12-24 account for 17.3% of the total Whitehorse population, which is comparable to the 17.4% across Greater Melbourne.



In 2012, there were 10,256 young people aged 12-17 living in the City of Whitehorse, accounting for 6.8% of the total population.

At the same time, there were 15,949 young people aged 18-24, accounting for 10.5% of the total population.

While the overall population of the City of Whitehorse is forecast to grow by 14% by 2031, the population growth is most likely to occur in the older age groups rather than the younger groups

Most young people aged 12-17 years are located in the suburbs of:

- Vermont South (979)
- Blackburn (917)
- Mitcham (899)

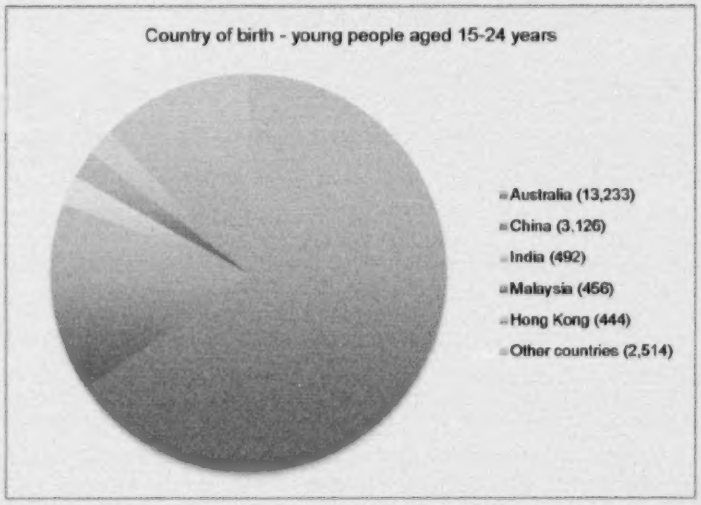
- Blackburn South (706)
- Box Hill North (693).

Most young people aged 18-24 years are located in the suburbs of:

- Burwood (2,260)
- Box Hill (1,780)
- Burwood East (1,256)
- Blackburn (1,138)
- Vermont South (1,106)
- Box Hill North (1,106).

Place of birth

The majority (65.3% of 20,265) of young people aged 15-24 living in the City of Whitehorse were born in Australia. Just over 15% (3,126) of all young people aged 15-24 living in the City of Whitehorse were born in China. Other than China, other major countries outside of Australia of birth of young people include India (2.4% / 492), Malaysia (2.3% / 456) and Hong Kong (2.2% / 444).



Across the entire Whitehorse population, 62.3% (94,359) of residents were born in Australia. Outside of Australia, the major countries of birth of residents of all ages include China (11,048), England (5,372), India (3,514), Malaysia (3,348), Vietnam (2,167), Hong Kong (2,040), Greece (1,916), New Zealand (1,909), Sri Lanka (1,790) and Italy (1,691).

In total, 33.4% of the Whitehorse population were born overseas, with 27.4% of the total population born in countries of non-English speaking backgrounds.

The indigenous population of 314 (0.22%) of the population. Of the indigenous population, 11% are aged 0-4 years, 17% are 5-14 years and 17% are aged 15-24 years.

Language spoken at home

Of all Whitehorse residents, 66.0% speak only English at home and 30.3% speak a non-English language (either exclusively, or in addition to English). Major languages other than English spoken at home in Whitehorse include Mandarin (7.5% / 11,353), Cantonese (5.1% / 7,766), Greek (3.1% / 4,761), Italian (1.7% / 2,248) and Vietnamese (1.2% / 1,862).

30.3% of the Whitehorse population speak a non-English language at home.

Major languages include Mandarin, Cantonese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese.

The number of people who spoke a language other than English at home increased by 9,324 or 25.6% between 2006 and 2011, while the number of people who spoke English only decreased by 3,013 or 2.9%.

A key measure of languages spoken is the level of proficiency in English across the population. In the City of Whitehorse, 8,301 people or 5.5% of the population speak another language and English not well at all.

5.5% of the Whitehorse population, or 8,301 people, have low proficiency in English

Participation in education

The City of Whitehorse experiences a relatively high level of participation in education and employment by young people aged 15-19 years (school leavers) compared to the Eastern Metro Region and Victorian averages.

Deakin University and the Box Hill Institute of TAFE attract a large number of young people aged 18-24 years into the municipality, particularly to the suburbs of Box Hill and Burwood and surrounds.

While Whitehorse has a comparable proportion of young people attending TAFE, it has a lower proportion attending university (compared to metropolitan Melbourne averages).

There is a large proportion of international students in the municipality.

School retention rates between Years 10 – 12 in the City of Whitehorse were consistently higher than the Victorian average in all years between 2008 and 2012. School retention rates in the City of Whitehorse were the lowest in five years in 2012, potentially indicating a trend towards greater early school departure

School retention rates between Years 10 – 12 in the City of Whitehorse were consistently higher than the Victorian average in all years between 2008 and 2012.

Successful Year 12 completion rates in the City of Whitehorse were consistently higher than the Victorian average in all years between 2008 and 2012. As with school retention rates, successful Year 12 completion rates in the City of Whitehorse were the lowest in three years in 2011, potentially indicating a trend towards greater early school departure.

Socio-economic disadvantage

Measuring socio-economic disadvantage of a population provides an insight to many factors that can influence a community's health and wellbeing. The SEIFA Index of Disadvantage measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage based on a range of attributes that reflect disadvantage such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations.

In 2011, the City of Whitehorse had a score of 1,051.2 on the SEIFA index of disadvantage.

This is the 11th highest SEIFA rating of local governments in Victoria, reflecting a relatively low level of disadvantage.

A higher score on the index means a lower level of disadvantage. A lower score on the index means a higher level of disadvantage.

While the SEIFA Index rating indicates a relatively low level of disadvantage, many pockets of disadvantage exist within the City of Whitehorse.

POLICY CONTEXT

The development of the Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018 is undertaken within the context of a wide range of government policy directions at the local, state and federal levels.

Policy directions for young people are considerable at all levels of government, with governments increasingly recognising the importance of enhancing education, employment and health and wellbeing outcomes for young people aged 12-25 years.

Governments at all levels recognise the long-term social and economic imperatives and benefits of investing in improving youth outcomes.

Federal Government

The Federal Government provides a range of national policy directions and key funding programs for young people throughout Australia. The major policy direction relating to young people at the federal level is the National Strategy for Young People.

National Strategy for Young Australians (2010)

This National strategy for young Australians articulates the Australian Government's aspiration for all young people to grow up safe, healthy, happy and resilient. It aims to guide future government policy making to ensure that this aspiration can become a reality for all young Australians.

The Australian Government's vision for young people is for all young people to grow up safe, healthy, happy and resilient and to have the opportunities and skills they need to learn, work, engage in community life and influence decisions that affect them.

The strategy focuses on eight priorities for supporting young people to succeed and build lives of their own choosing:

1. Improving the health and wellbeing of all young people
2. Equipping young Australians to shape their own futures through education
3. Supporting young Australians within their families
4. Empowering young Australians to take part and be active in their communities
5. Equipping young Australians with the skills and personal networks they need to gain, and be successful in, employment
6. Enabling young Australians to participate confidently and safely online
7. Strengthening early intervention with young Australians to help prevent any problems getting worse and to help young people get their lives back on track
8. Establishing clear-cut legal consequences for behaviours that endanger the safety of others.

In addition to the national strategy for young people, the Federal Government is active in setting policy priorities through its funding and implementation of various services and programs.

State Government

The Victorian Government provides a range of policy directions and key funding programs for young people throughout Victoria. Key state-level policy frameworks and directions that relate to young people aged 12-25 years include:

Victoria's Vulnerable Children – Our Shared Responsibility 2013- 2022

This strategy articulates a shared commitment across Victorian Government departments to pursue three high level and interconnected strategic goals for improving outcomes for vulnerable children and families. The three goals are to: prevent abuse and neglect; act earlier when children are vulnerable; and improve outcomes for children in statutory care.

The strategy aims to achieve the following outcomes over the course of its implementation:

- Better health outcomes for vulnerable children.
- Improved participation and attainment of children in universal services, especially school.
- Earlier and appropriate attention by adult services to the needs of children.
- Reduction in the impact of parental risk factors that contribute most to child abuse and neglect.
- Lower rates of abuse and neglect.
- Lower rates of children requiring out-of-home care.
- Improved placement stability for children and young people in out-of-home care.
- Improved life outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care.

Engage, Involve, Create – Youth Statement 2012

This strategy outlines the Government's vision for all Victorian young people: that all young Victorians experience healthy, active and fulfilling lives and have the opportunity to:

- Be engaged in education and/or employment
- Be involved in their communities and decisions that affect them
- Create change, enterprise and culture

Victorian Child and Adolescent Outcomes Framework 2008

The Victorian Child and Adolescent Outcomes Framework provides an evidence-based structure for ongoing monitoring and reporting of child and adolescent outcomes. The framework identifies four priority population groups of Victorian children and young people who tend to face more complex challenges and require additional monitoring efforts to better understand their needs:

- Aboriginal children
- Children living with a disability, special needs or developmental delay
- Recent or high-need immigrant children

- Children suffering chronic disadvantage (including those in Out-of-Home Care within the child protection system, homeless young people or those in the juvenile justice system).

Victorian Office of Youth

The Office for Youth is the key agency driving a whole-of-government agenda in relation to Victorians aged 12 to 25. It is responsible for policy advice, research and strategic planning relating to government policies, programs and service delivery for young Victorians.

The Victoria Government, through its Office for Youth, delivers programs and initiatives that support the social, civic and economic participation of young people. These initiatives provide an insight to the priority areas of investment and support for young people from the Victorian Government.

Department of Human Services (DHS) Policy and Funding Plan 2012 – 2015

The Department of Human Services prepares a policy and funding plan every three years to inform funded organisations of the department's service funding strategies and priorities. The youth section of the plan focuses on driving a whole-of-government agenda in relation to Victorians aged 12 to 25 and delivering programs and initiatives that support the social, civic and economic participation of young people.

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Strategic Plan 2013-2017

The DEECD Strategic Plan outlines their 10-year goal to become a world leader in learning and development, plus the outcomes they are seeking to deliver in the next decade, and the priorities and strategies established for 2013-17. The department has identified four outcome areas in which it wants to improve: Achievement; Engagement; Wellbeing; and, Productivity.

To deliver on its goal and outcomes, the Department's focus for 2013-17 will be to:

1. Improve the opportunities for all learners without exception.
2. Boost children's learning and wellbeing in their early years.
3. Achieve large gains in literacy, maths and science.
4. Ensure secondary schooling is more inclusive, flexible and engaging and equips young people for further study and work.
5. Give Victorians relevant skills by raising the quality and economic value of vocational and higher education.

Code of Ethical Practice – A First Step for the Victorian Youth Sector 2007

The Code of Ethical Practice – A First Step for the Victorian Youth Sector outlines a set of youth work principles and practice responsibilities for youth workers, identified through consultation with the youth sector.

The youth work principles include:

- the empowerment of all young people
- young people's participation
- social justice for young people
- the safety of young people
- respect for young people's human dignity and worth
- young people's connectedness to important people in their lives, such as family and community
- positive health and wellbeing outcomes for young people
- the positive transitions and healthy development of young people.

Youth Partnerships 2011

Youth Partnerships is a Victorian Government initiative which will design and test new ways for the education, youth and family support, justice, homelessness and mental health sectors to work more collaboratively to support individual young people experiencing problems. The key goals of Youth Partnerships are to:

- improve engagement in education and training; and
- reduce the escalation of social, individual and behavioural problems for vulnerable young people.

Over three years, the Government will support service providers to work together to ensure:

- A greater focus on early intervention.
- Consistent approaches to assessment and referral of young people across these sectors.
- Clear entry points into the right youth services at the right time, including tailored education options.

Whitehorse City Council

Whitehorse City Council has a comprehensive suite of policies that respond to the diversity of community needs in the City of Whitehorse encompassing: leadership, planning, support, and advocacy; and the delivery of sustainable local services and facilities to support the health and wellbeing of young people who live, work and study in the City of Whitehorse.

City of Whitehorse Council Vision 2013 – 2023

The Council Vision 2013-2023 commits Whitehorse City Council to a set of priorities for future action. These priorities have been translated into five Strategic Directions to reflect and respond to our community's aspirations, values and needs. The five Strategic Directions include:

1. Support a healthy, vibrant, inclusive and diverse community;
2. Maintain and enhance our built environment to ensure a liveable and sustainable city;
3. Protect and enhance our open space and natural environments;

4. Strategic leadership and open and accessible government; and
5. Support a healthy local economy.

City of Whitehorse Council Plan 2013 – 2017

The Council Plan identifies Council's strategic priorities and key actions for the next four years. This important document sets Council's direction for the future and details how Council will allocate its financial and non-financial resources to deliver the Council Plan and all Council services, for the next four years. The Council Plan is Council's response to the goals and aspirations as articulated in the 10 year plan; Council Vision 2013 2023.

The Council Plan comprises five Strategic Objectives and 43 strategies to be implemented over the next four years. The Strategic Objectives are:

1. Appropriate multipurpose programs, services, facilities and initiatives that promote and deliver wellbeing and inclusive connected communities
2. Maintain, develop and enhance our built environment
3. Increase in the amount of quality open space and improvement in the sustainability of our natural environment
4. Strong leadership and governance in partnership with the community and supported through regional collaboration and cooperation
5. A dynamic local economic environment that is regionally connected.

Other key Council strategic plans of relevance to youth planning include:

- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013 2017
- Municipal Early Years Plan 2009-2013
- Diversity Policy and Action Plan 2012-2016
- Disability Policy and Action Plan 2012-2016
- Reconciliation Action Plan 2011-2015
- Play Space Strategy 2011

SERVICE MAPPING

A key step in the development of the Municipal Youth Plan has been the profiling and mapping of services available in the City of Whitehorse for young people across three categories:

Universal services

Services providing support to all who need it, without regard to their ability to pay. In other words, Universal services provide an entry point into the services system. It is, therefore, important to note at this point that the service system is predicated and underpinned by the commonly prescribed family and community attributes of security, shelter, love, and nurturing amongst others. Thus, it is in part the role of universal services to identify where these characteristics are lacking or missing in a young person's life and making the necessary referral to Secondary support services. In a youth services context, Universal services include, Neighbourhood and Community Houses, Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary education, Churches, Recreation and Sporting clubs, Libraries, and general Youth Centres.

Secondary services

Services for young people with a special need or exhibiting an early stage risk factor. These services include employment and accommodation services, health and disability services, as well as support and parenting services for families with the aim of reducing risk factors or managing emerging problems.

Tertiary services

Services for young people with needs that require intensive (and often ongoing) intervention. These services include child protection and placement services.

The youth service system in Whitehorse is complex, with a diversity of service providers, funding providers and service boundaries. The age range of people supported by youth services (12-25 years) presents an additional layer of complexity to the service system, given the vastly differing needs of 12 year olds and young people in their late teens and early 20's.

The service mapping exercise identified that the City of Whitehorse is very well serviced by youth-focused services and supports. Being centrally located in the eastern metropolitan region results in many regionally-focused services being based in the City of Whitehorse.

Most universal services are well dispersed throughout the municipality. Neighbourhood houses, community centres and primary schools are particularly well dispersed. Libraries and secondary schools are both reasonably well dispersed throughout the municipality, though have fewer located in the south west of the city. The two major institutions are located in Box Hill and Nunawading, both on tram lines and train line for Box Hill. There is only one major youth centre, which is located in Box Hill.

In terms of secondary and tertiary services, almost all of these services provided in the City of Whitehorse are located in Box Hill. While there is largely a service concentration in the Box Hill area, the area is centrally located and well connected via public transport including trains, trams and buses.

The following summarises the availability of youth-focused services available in the City of Whitehorse:

Universal services

Neighbourhood houses / community centres	The City of Whitehorse is well serviced by 10 high quality neighbourhood houses/community centres that provide a range of community strengthening activities and support services for young people and families.
Education	The municipality is well resourced with a range of primary, secondary, and tertiary schools/colleges that are operated under government, independent or catholic education auspices. • Primary schools – 38 • Secondary schools - 13 • Tertiary institutions - 2
Churches	The City of Whitehorse is well serviced by nearly 100 churches (religious institutions), covering most religious beliefs.
Sport, recreation & leisure	The City of Whitehorse is well serviced by over 180 recreation, sport, and general leisure based clubs and societies spread across the municipality.
Libraries	The municipality is well serviced with four (4) library branches spread across the municipality.
Youth centres	There are two (2) main youth centres in Whitehorse accessed by young people – one run by Council in Box Hill (Youth Connexions) and another run by the Mitcham Baptist Church in Mitcham (The Factory).

Secondary & tertiary services

Housing & accommodation	There are a variety of services and programs within Whitehorse aimed at meeting the accommodation needs of young people. These are predominantly provided by four (4) key service agencies.
Employment & training services	There are a variety of services and programs that aim to meet the employment needs of young people in Whitehorse. There are five (5) major service providers in Whitehorse that provide employment and training services.
Health services	There are a wide variety of health services and programs working with young people in the Whitehorse municipality. This scope of this sector is very broad.

	Mental health services There are four (4) major agencies providing mental health services in Whitehorse. Drug and alcohol service There are three (3) major agencies providing drug and alcohol support services in the City of Whitehorse. General health services There are three (3) major agencies providing general health services in the City of Whitehorse. Sexual health and family planning services There are five (5) major agencies providing sexual health and family planning services in the City of Whitehorse.
Multicultural support services	There are a range of multicultural youth focused services based in Whitehorse aimed at meeting the needs of refugee and migrant young people. There are six (6) major service providers in Whitehorse that provide multicultural support services.
Disability support services	There are a range of disability services operating in the municipality, providing direct support services and programs and/or peak advocacy activities. There are four (4) major agencies providing disability services in Whitehorse, most relevant from a youth perspective. There is also support for sport and recreation environments that are inclusive of people with disabilities and provision of recreation-based respite weekends away for carers of people with a disability or special needs.
Police stations	There are three (3) police stations operating in the City of Whitehorse, two of which are staffed 24 hours a day.
Legal services	Young people in Whitehorse have access to free legal advice through the services provided by the Eastern Community Legal Centre. This is the only community legal centre in the Eastern region covering the municipalities of Boroondara, Manningham, Maroondah, Knox, Yarra Ranges and Whitehorse. Free legal advice is available for disadvantaged members of the community, particularly culturally and linguistic diverse (CALD) communities, young and elderly people and victims of family violence.
Specialist schools	There are four (4) specialist schools located in the City of Whitehorse, including: • Blackburn English Language School – catering to refugee and migrant students • Vermont South Special School - catering to primary aged students with a mild intellectual disability

	• Burwood East Special Development School - catering to students aged from 4 to 18 with a medium to high intellectual disability. • Aurora School - catering to students aged 3 to 18 who are deaf or deaf and blind and requiring early intervention, and/or early education.
General Support and Counselling Services	In addition to the above specific services, there a wide number of general support and counselling services and programs catering to the needs of young people in the Whitehorse area
Mandated services	A range of mandated services are provided from the DHS Box Hill offices, including protective services, juvenile justice and Child First.

SHAPING A NEW PLAN

Four key sources of information have been documented to inform the development of the Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018. These include:

- Assessment of government policy, funding and programs at federal, state and local levels.
- Summary of demographic information relating to young people in the City of Whitehorse.
- Profile and mapping of universal, secondary and tertiary services available in the City of Whitehorse to support young people.
- Outcomes from the community engagement process undertaken to capture community and stakeholder feedback in relation to improving outcomes for young people in the City of Whitehorse.

Together, these sources of information have shaped the development and structure of the new plan.

Government policy

Despite differences in tier of government and politics of the day, government policy, funding and programs at federal, state and local levels are largely consistent in priorities for improving outcomes for young people.

Some of the key priority areas consistently identified in government policy, funding and programs include:

- Positively promoting, recognising, respecting and celebrating young people
- Improving the health and wellbeing of young people
    - Reducing the impacts of drugs, alcohol and other substance abuse
    - Increasing physical activity
    - Improving nutrition
    - Promoting positive body image
    - Reducing self harm
    - Reducing the prevalence and impact of bullying
    - Suicide prevention
- Enhancing mental health and wellbeing
- Supporting youth preparation for and participation in education, training and employment, including transitions
    - School attendance
    - Year 12 attainment
    - Vocational training

- Apprenticeships
- Readiness for employment

- Fostering youth leadership
- Supporting positive family and personal relationships
- Encouraging young people to participate in the community and be active
- Engaging young people in planning and decision making processes
- Promoting safe, respectful and appropriate behaviours
- Strengthening early intervention
- Creating safe communities
- Supporting young people to develop resilience
- Empowering young people
- Promoting social inclusion, particularly for young people of CALD backgrounds
- Helping vulnerable young people and those most at risk
- Building strong relationships, self identity and confidence in young people
- Improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people
- Mentoring for young people
- Improving youth service quality, accessibility, affordability and integration
    - Increased focus on early intervention
    - Consistent approaches to assessment and referral of young people
    - Clear entry points into the right youth services
    - Ensuring services are youth-focused, integrated and provided at the right time
    - Providing youth friendly, welcoming and inclusive services
    - Improving accessibility, affordability and flexibility of services
    - Improving connectivity between services and young people in need
    - Increase service coordination and integration

Government policy, funding and programs support universal service provision for all young people and supported targeted service provision for young people with additional needs and high levels of vulnerability.

Demographic information

The assessment of demographic information relating to young people in the City of Whitehorse highlighted a few significant implications for the new Municipal Youth Plan.

Key among these in the City of Whitehorse is the cultural and language diversity within the municipality and the opportunities and challenges this presents. Key priorities identified include the need to ensure that young people of all backgrounds are welcome, included and can access support services they

require. This particularly relates to the high numbers of international students, young people born overseas and recently arrived migrants and refugees.

Another key finding of the demographic assessment relates to the need to continue to focus on education, training and employment. High priorities include maintaining and increasing secondary school retention rates between Years 10-12, Year 12 completion rates, job readiness and experience, and participation in post secondary school education, training and employment.

While the City of Whitehorse enjoys the 11tjh lowest level of socio-economic disadvantage in Victoria at the municipal level, significant disadvantage does exist within pockets of the community and must be recognised.

Service mapping

The service mapping exercise demonstrated that the City of Whitehorse, being centrally located in the eastern metropolitan region, is very well serviced by youth services.

Universal services are well dispersed throughout the municipality. Secondary and tertiary services tend to be more concentrated in the Box Hill precinct, which is quite accessible via car and public transport.

No significant service gaps were identified through the mapping process.

Community consultation

The extensive community consultation process identified the many positive attributes of Whitehorse for young people; key issues and challenges currently faced by young people; a number of important service gaps; and a significant number of opportunities and priorities to improve outcomes for young people in Whitehorse.

Key directions

Community consultation, research, analysis of legislation and policy directions have identified five key directions for the Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan to improve outcomes for young people and their families in the municipality.

Key priorities for improving outcomes for young people appeared to consistently revolve around five key themes: young people; their families and personal relationships; employment, training and employment; the services and supports young people access; and the broader community in which they live.

With these themes in mind, the following five key directions were identified:

- Healthy, resilient and engaged young people

  The first of these focuses on young people and ensuring that they have the opportunity to maximise their personal health and wellbeing. A significant focus of government policy and community engagement feedback related to enhancing positive health attributes and lifestyle choices and reducing negative health impacts and behaviours. Young people at this age are exposed to many opportunities, choices and risk. Supporting young people to be healthy, resilient and engaged was identified a clear priority theme.

- Secure families and relationships

  The second of these focuses on importance of secure, safe, involved and caring family environments and healthy personal relationships to the health and wellbeing of young people. Young people and youth service providers consistently identified relationships as a major priority issue, in particular ensuring that such relationships in a young person's life are positive. This key direction incorporates the importance of safe, respectful and appropriate behaviours among young people and reducing the prevalence of bullying. Bullying, in all its forms, was consistently identified as the most important issue facing young people in Whitehorse.

- Employment, training and education opportunities

  The third key direction focuses on employment, training and education opportunities. Supporting young people to remain engaged in education for as long as possible and subsequently transition into training, higher education and eventually employment is a major focus and priority for young people, their families, service and education providers and governments. Remaining engaged in education, training and employment has direct links to a young person's social connectivity, sense of identity, mental health and overall wellbeing. These transitions represent significant changes and challenges for most young people.

- Comprehensive services for all young people

  The fourth key direction focuses on the quality, accessibility, flexibility, affordability and integration of services that support young people. A key priority of this key direction is to increase knowledge about and use of existing services that already exist in Whitehorse. This key direction recognises the importance of a high quality youth focussed service system in guiding and supporting young people through the complex years of their transition from childhood to adulthood.

It responds to key priorities identified through the community consultation process in relation to improving service availability and accessibility and enhancing services where gaps exist, particularly in

the areas of universal and general youth services, early intervention programs, strengthened mentoring programs, dual diagnosis services, affordable housing for young people and school holiday programs.

- Safe, welcoming and inclusive community for all young people

  The final key direction focuses on improving the environment in which a young person lives, studies and works. In particular, this key direction seeks to ensure that the City of Whitehorse is a safe, welcoming and inclusive community for all young people, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, language, gender, ability or socio economic status. This key direction responds to a clear priority conveyed through the community consultation process in relation to inclusiveness and a major priority of young people in relation to acknowledgment, being valued and being respected.

Linkage of the Key Strategic Objectives of the Municipal Youth Plan with the Municipal Public Health Plan and the Council Plan

Within the five proposed key directions a number of priority strategic directions have been identified, based on the analysis of background documents and community consultation feedback.

	Council Plan Strategic Direction	**MPHP** Objective
Healthy, resilient and engaged young people		
Promoting physically active and healthy lifestyles for young people	1 & 2	1.1, 1.2, 1.4 & 2.2
Promoting positive eating and nutritional awareness among young people	1 & 5	1.1 & 5.2
Promoting community participation and engagement	1 & 4	1.4, 1.5 & 4.1
Encouraging young people to participate in volunteering programs	1 & 4	1.4, 1.5 & 4.1
Facilitating and promoting youth leadership opportunities	4	4.1
Supporting mental health and wellbeing and resilience	1	1.1 & 1.2
Building young people's resilience	1	1.2 & 1.4
Reducing the impact of alcohol, drug and substance abuse	1 & 4	1.1, 1.2, 4.1 & 4.3
Supporting healthy bodies and promoting positive body image and identity	1	1.1 & 1.2
Reducing the prevalence of self-harm among young people	1 & 4	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 4.1 & 4.2
Promoting positive sexual health and behaviour	1 & 4	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 4.1 & 4.2
Minimising exposure to risk and risky behaviours	1	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5 4.1 & 4.2
Secure families and relationships		
Strengthening families and their support of young people	1	1.3 & 1.4
Enhancing relationships between young people	1	1.3 & 1.4
Promoting the importance of trusting, caring, reliable and consistent relationships to the health and wellbeing of young people.	1	1.3 & 1.4
Promoting safe, respectful and appropriate behaviours among young people.	1	1.2, 1.3, 1.4 & 1.5

Key Strategic Priorities in the *Whitehorse Council Plan 2013-17* and the Municipal Public Health Plan (MPHP) – *Health & Wellbeing in Whitehorse 2013-17*

STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1 SUPPORT A HEALTHY, VIBRANT, INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2 MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO ENSURE A LIVEABLE AND SUSTAINABLE CITY	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3 PROTECT AND ENHANCE OUR OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4 STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE GOVERNMENT	STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5 SUPPORT A HEALTHY LOCAL ECONOMY
OBJECTIVE 1.1 To identify and respond to emerging health priorities across the lifespan*	**OBJECTIVE 2.1** To integrate health outcomes when considering land use planning and urban design projects	**OBJECTIVE 3.1** To minimise the impacts of climate change on our natural environment and promote efficient use of resources*	**OBJECTIVE 4.1** To strengthen and build partnerships to achieve a collaborative approach to health and wellbeing	**OBJECTIVE 5.1** To advocate for increased affordable housing*
OBJECTIVE 1.2 To work in partnership to support access to culturally appropriate health services, including preventative and protective health services*	**OBJECTIVE 2.2** To create built environments that make it easier for people to be physically active	**OBJECTIVE 3.2** To develop a municipality which retains, enhances and increases open space and sustainable streetscapes*	**OBJECTIVE 4.2** To use evidence-based practice to guide policy and decision making	**OBJECTIVE 5.2** To improve access to affordable, nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods
OBJECTIVE 1.3 To promote gender equity and equal and respectful relationships*	**OBJECTIVE 2.3** To create safe, inclusive and accessible environments for all*	**OBJECTIVE 3.3** To minimise the impact of climate change on residents, particularly those most vulnerable	**OBJECTIVE 4.3** To enhance reporting and accountability of health and wellbeing outcomes to the community	**OBJECTIVE 5.3** To support planning a healthy community and business mix, increasing opportunities to live, work and play in Whitehorse
OBJECTIVE 1.4 To provide opportunities for increased social connections through participation in arts and culture, recreation, sporting and other community activities*	**OBJECTIVE 2.4** To advocate and plan for integrated transport connections to provide increased opportunities for active living and local employment*			
OBJECTIVE 1.5 To encourage social and cultural environments that value people in all their diversity				

*Objectives which are also in the Council Plan 2013-2017 *Health and Wellbeing in Whitehorse 2013-2017* will be implemented with actions underneath each of the objectives to address the health and wellbeing priorities

CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS | REDUCING HARM FROM ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS | INCREASING ACTIVE LIVING | SUPPORTING HEALTHY EATING | PROMOTING MENTAL WELLBEING

Reducing the prevalence and impact of bullying in all forms	1 & 4	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1 & 4.2
Increasing social inclusion	1	1.3, 1.4 & 1.5
Reducing cultural and language barriers to participation in youth programs, services and activities.	1	1.3, 1.4 & 1.5
Employment, training and education opportunities		
Supporting young people to achieve their best in education and training	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 4.2 & 5.3
Maintaining high levels of school attendance	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Supporting young people with learning and behavioural challenges to remain engaged in education	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Supporting young people struggling in mainstream education settings to access alternative education opportunities	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Supporting young people to access training and apprenticeships	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Supporting young people to access relevant and valuable work experience	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Supporting young people to prepare for and access employment	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Facilitating access by young people to education and information about current, relevant and topical issues	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Supporting young people through key transitions	1, 4 & 5	1.4, 1.5, 4.2 & 5.3
Comprehensive services for all young people		
Increasing knowledge about existing services	1 & 4	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1 & 4.2
De-stigmatising young people accessing assistance	1, 4 & 5	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1, 4.2 & 5.1
Improving accessibility, flexibility and affordability of services by young people	1, 4 & 5	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1, 4.2 & 5.1
Promoting all youth service providers in Whitehorse as welcoming and inclusive of all young people	1 & 4	1.2, 1.4, 1.5 & 4.1
Improving public transport services in Whitehorse to improve access to services	2	2.4
Ensuring that services are culturally competent	1 & 4	1.5, 4.1 & 4.2
Improving connection between services and young people not currently engaged with youth-focussed services	1 & 4	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1 & 4.2
Improving online communications between services and young people	1 & 4	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1 & 4.2
Increasing partnering, collaboration and networking across the youth services sector	1 & 4	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1 & 4.2

Enhancing youth service workforce skills, education and capacity	5	5.3
Strengthening partnerships and involvement with schools	1	1.2
Strengthening Council's Youth Services	1 & 4	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1 & 4.2
Expanding youth services available for young people in Whitehorse, including universal and general youth services, early intervention programs, strengthened mentoring programs, dual diagnosis services, affordable housing for young people and school holiday programs.	1, 4 & 5	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 4.1, 4.2 & 5.1
Safe, welcoming and inclusive community for all young people		
Celebrating, acknowledging and recognising young people	1	1.3 & 1.5
Engaging young people in conversations about issues that affect them	1 & 4	1.3, 1.5 & 4.1
Creating a city in which all young people feel welcome and secure	1 & 2	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 & 2.4
Creating a safe community	1 & 2	1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 & 2.4

These five key directions and key strategic priorities form the basis of the following strategic action plan.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2014-2018

The Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018, *A City for all Young People*, contains a range of key directions, objectives and actions aimed at improving the lives and wellbeing of young people aged 12-25 years who live, work or study in the City of Whitehorse. This plan builds on the work undertaken and success achieved through the implementation of the previous youth plans in the City of Whitehorse.

All key directions, objectives and actions have been identified based on detailed consideration of community consultation findings, service mapping, an analysis of demographics, and current youth focused policy, funding and programs at various levels of government.

The strategic action plan of the City of Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018 is structured around the following framework comprising five key, interlinked pillars with a central focus on enhancing outcomes for young people.

Employment, training & education opportunities
Secure families & relationships
Healthy, resilient & engaged young people
Safe, welcoming & inclusive community
Comprehensive services for all young people

The City of Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan 2014-2018 utilises the term 'family' in its broadest sense, recognising and respecting the full diversity of relationship structures that wrap around and support young people. The plan acknowledges the full diversity of young people and how they choose to live their lives and spend their time.

The plan will be given effect through the development of annual implementation plan to operationalise the key directions, objectives and strategic actions outlined in this plan and report to Council on its implementation every six months.

YOUTH PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & REVIEW

The City of Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan will be implemented over the four year period 2014-2018 by various departments across the Whitehorse City Council and with partner agencies.

Council staff will develop an annual implementation plan to operationalise the key directions, objectives and strategic actions outlined in this plan and report to Council on its implementation every six months.

The development of an annual implementation plan enables Council to be responsive to the needs of young people as they change over time, while continuing to work towards an agreed framework of key directions and objectives. It also enables Council to conduct an ongoing review of progress and assessment of young people in Whitehorse and their needs. Central to this will be the need for ongoing capture and analysis of available data and information.

It is understood that government policy, funding and programs can change significantly over time and this model of a strategic action plan and an annual implementation plan enables Council to be flexible and responsive to such changes.

Implementation of the City of Whitehorse Municipal Youth Plan will be monitored over time and progress reported to and guided by a multi-agency reference group.

The plan will be reviewed and renewed at the end of 2018.

Strategic Action Plan – Whitehorse a city for all young people

Healthy, resilient & engaged young people	
Promoting physically active and healthy lifestyles	
1.1	Encourage and support young people of all ages up to 25 years to regularly participate in sport, recreation and personal exercise.
1.2	Promote positive eating and nutritional awareness among young people at every opportunity.
1.3	Continue to develop, upgrade and connect Council public facilities that encourage and enable active lifestyles, including parks, gardens, open spaces and network of walking and off-road cycling tracks.
Promoting community participation and engagement	
1.4	Encourage young people to be active, engaged, having fun and socialise through participation in sporting and recreation clubs, arts, culture and community groups, service clubs, youth groups and any other organised activity-focused group.
1.5	Host, partner and support community festivals and events that encourage participation by young people.
1.6	Encourage young people to participate in volunteering programs as an opportunity to engage in community life, help others and develop valuable skills and experience.
1.7	Facilitate and promote youth leadership opportunities, including ongoing support for the Whitehorse Youth Representative Committee.
Supporting mental health, wellbeing and resilience	
1.8	Proactively work with youth service providers, schools and other agencies to support young people and their families experiencing mental health issues, including depression and anxiety.
1.9	Promote services, supports, programs and activities available within the City of Whitehorse for young people and their families living with mental health issues.
1.10	Develop an initiative to encourage, support and equip young people to engage in conversations with friends, peers and others about mental issues and assistance that is available.
1.11	Advocate for increased state and federal government funding to enable access to early intervention services for young people experiencing mental health issues.
1.12	Develop and implement programs that focus on building young people's resilience.
Reducing the impact of alcohol, drug and substance abuse	

Healthy, resilient & engaged young people	
1.13	In partnership with youth service providers, schools and other agencies, continue to work to reduce the prevalence of alcohol, drug and substance abuse and its impact on young people and their lives.
1.14	Implement initiatives aimed at supporting young people to resist peer pressure to consume alcohol and drugs at a young age and at excessive levels.
1.15	Promote awareness of the inter-relationship between drugs, alcohol and other substance use and mental health.
Supporting healthy bodies	
1.16	Support initiatives to promote positive body image and identity and build young people's resilience.
1.17	Work in partnership with service providers, schools and other agencies to reduce the prevalence of self-harm among young people.
1.18	Continue to promote and support positive sexual health and behaviour among young people, including through increased sexual health education.
Minimising exposure to risk and risky behaviours	
1.19	Support young people to recognise risk within their environment and to make informed and safer decisions in relation to engaging in risky behaviours.
1.20	Proactively work with young people that are most likely to become disengaged and participate in high-risk behaviours.
1.21	Implement road safety strategies to address over representation of young people involved in road accidents.

Secure families & relationships	
Strengthening families and their support of young people	
2.1	Promote the importance of secure, safe, involved and caring family environments to the health and wellbeing of young people.
2.2	Support young people to develop and maintain positive family relationships.
2.3	Maintain close engagement and involvement of parents, caregivers and young people in the delivery of youth services.
2.4	Increase the provision of information for parents and caregivers about issues that impact on young people and supports that are available.
Enhancing relationships between young people	
2.5	Promote the importance of trusting, caring, reliable and consistent relationships to the health and wellbeing of young people.
2.6	Promote safe, respectful and appropriate behaviours among young people.
Reducing the prevalence and impact of bullying in all forms	
2.7	Work in partnership with service providers, schools and other agencies to develop high profile and targeted campaigns to stop bullying in all forms.
2.8	Develop and implement an education and support program to support young people to combat and manage bullying.
2.9	Work with service providers and key education institutions to publicly promote a culture of respect among young people, in which all young people are respected and accepted as they are.
Increasing social inclusion	
2.10	Work with youth service providers, schools, Box Hill Institute of TAFE and Deakin University to facilitate activities that promote social inclusion for young people of all backgrounds.
2.11	Identify opportunities to further reduce cultural and language barriers to participation in youth programs, services and activities.

Education, training and employment opportunities	
Supporting young people to achieve their best in education and training	
3.1	Work with the school sector to sustain school attendance for as long as possible in a young person's life.
3.2	Communicate the link between school attendance to social inclusion and improved health and wellbeing.
3.3	Support young people with learning and behavioural challenges to receive the assistance they require to remain engaged in education.
3.4	Work with partners in the education sector to support young people struggling in mainstream education settings to access alternative education opportunities.
3.5	Support young people to access training and apprenticeships.
Supporting young people to access relevant and valuable work experience	
3.6	Promote volunteering as an opportunity for young people to gain valuable skills and work experience.
3.7	Explore opportunities for young people to gain work experience through the Whitehorse City Council.
Supporting young people to prepare for and access employment	
3.8	Increase promotion of the diversity of employment opportunities available in Whitehorse.
3.9	Identify opportunities to provide services and support to young people to prepare for and secure employment, particularly through the provision of free resume writing.
3.10	Identify opportunities to provide young people not engaged in education and training settings with access to career counselling and guidance.
Facilitating access by young people to education and information about current, relevant and topical issues	
3.11	Provide opportunities for young people to learn about issues that are relevant to them, in particular from other young people sharing stories about their own life journey and experiences.
Supporting young people through key transitions	
3.12	Provide support to young people in planning and managing their transition from living at home to independent living.
3.13	Support transitions between primary school and secondary school, and between secondary school and further education, training or employment.

Comprehensive services for all young people

Increasing knowledge about existing services	
4.1	Promote Council's youth services to all young people looking for services or support, including what services are available and its operations.
4.2	De-stigmatise young people accessing assistance by promoting Council's youth services as a positive central information and referral service for young people in the community.
4.3	Develop a comprehensive and inclusive strategy to provide information about all existing services, supports, programs, events and activities to young people and their families in Whitehorse.[44]
Improving accessibility, flexibility and affordability of services by young people	
4.4	Develop a joint initiative promoting all youth service providers in Whitehorse as welcoming and inclusive of all young people regardless of difference in all its forms. This is to be done in a way that provides anonymity of the first contact by a young person in order to remove perceived barriers.
4.5	Advocate for public transport improvements in Whitehorse, particularly north-south routes, to improve access by young people to services given the concentration of services in the Box Hill area.
4.6	Work with service providers to ensure that services are culturally competent for indigenous clients and where possible provide indigenous specific services.
4.7	Investigate opportunities to extend library opening hours, specifically on weekends, in order to offer young people a safe and accessible place to study.
4.8	Develop strategies to better connect with all young people in Whitehorse, in particular those who are not currently engaged with youth-focussed services and not actively seeking assistance. Young people of CALD backgrounds have been identified as a priority to better engage with.
4.9	Significantly improve Council's youth services on-line communications to strengthen connection with young people and enable more flexible and youth appropriate service delivery.
Increasing partnering, collaboration and networking across the youth services sector	
4.10	Continue to facilitate the Youth Issues Network (YIN) as the principle youth service network in Whitehorse to facilitate networking, professional development, information sharing, referral strengthening and collaboration between key agencies.[7]

[7] This should include the exchange of information about services and initiatives for young people operating throughout eastern metropolitan Melbourne.

Comprehensive services for all young people	
4.11	Continue to use the Youth Issues Network to encourage and facilitate greater communication between service providers in order to provide a more seamless, efficient and effective service system to young people.
4.12	Work with local governments across the eastern metropolitan region to foster a coordinated regional youth service system.
4.13	Further increase collaboration between service providers working with young people through a welcoming, proactive and flexible approach to service delivery and a shared commitment to proactively assist young people to navigate the service system.
4.14	Through the Youth Issues Network, develop a sector-wide approach to better support young people after the contracted time of assistance has ended.
4.15	Identify new opportunities to further strengthen networking across the youth service sector and improve referral pathways and processes.
Enhancing youth service workforce capacity	
4.16	Through the Youth Issues Network, develop a sector-wide approach to enhancing the skills, education and capacity of youth service professionals.
Strengthening partnerships and involvement with schools	
4.17	Continue to strengthen the relationship between Council, service providers and primary and secondary schools in the City of Whitehorse with the aim of better addressing youth related issues and opportunities through schools.
4.18	Explore opportunities to provide schools in the City of Whitehorse with increased service presence, support and youth-related information and resources.
4.19	Work with the network of school principals to collectively identify priority issues and collaborative responses.
Strengthening Council's Youth Services	
4.20	Continue to build and develop Council's youth services to deliver high quality universal services, supports, programs, events and activities aimed at improving the lives and wellbeing of young people aged 12-25 years.
4.21	Strengthen Council's focus on early intervention.
4.22	Continue to deliver, expand and strengthen existing successful youth programs.
4.23	Continue to deliver, extend and strengthen the successful outreach model of general youth services to young people unable to attend centre-based activities.
4.24	Identify and pursue opportunities for funding to create additional youth service worker positions in order to provide improved service delivery.

Comprehensive services for all young people	
4.25	Identify opportunities to better meet needs and make services more accessible and age appropriate to young people in the 12 – 25 year age range.
4.26	Increased promotion activities to improve awareness by young people and their families of Council's youth services, how it operates and the location of the Youth ConneXions centre.
4.27	Provide a free WiFi internet connection in the Youth ConneXions centre as a means of making the centre more youth friendly and accessible.
4.28	Continue to upgrade youth centre facilities, equipment and computers to ensure relevant, attractive and accessible for young people.
4.29	Continue to improve communication and coordination between different departments to improve Council's overall delivery of services to young people.
Expanding youth services available for young people in Whitehorse	
4.30	Advocate for increased government funding of universal and general youth services.
4.31	Advocate for increased government funding for early intervention programs to avoid the prevalence of young people developing future complex problems.
4.32	Identify opportunities with youth service providers to strengthen mentoring programs for young people in Whitehorse, with a focus on positive male role models.
4.33	Advocate for increased government funding for dual diagnosis services and assistance for young people, in particular for complex cases involving drug / alcohol use and mental health issues.
4.34	Advocate for increased government funding for improved affordable housing for young people, in particular emergency accommodation and affordable student accommodation.
4.35	Facilitate additional opportunities to provide school holiday programs for young people in the 12-16 age group.

** This should include:

- A significantly enhanced online and social media presence, which is not directly tied to Council's corporate website.
- Communications mechanisms that connect directly to a much larger audience of young people than current access information via Council.
- Information about Council and other service providers.
- Consideration of various communication platforms for providing information to different audiences, including parents and caregivers.
- Consideration of Youth ConneXions having its own stand alone web page, which would serve as the primary portal for service information.

- Integration of information sources with mobile devices.
- The capacity to tailor information to meet the young person's specific needs.
- Creating a resource that is more than a simple directory to include information about the service, what it does, who is eligible, how the service operates etc.
- Consideration of how such information can be maintained as current and relevant.

Safe, welcoming & inclusive community	
Celebrating, acknowledging and recognising young people	
5.1	Celebrate young people and promote positive stories about young people and the positive contribution that they make to our community.
5.2	Routinely recognise and showcase positive attributes, skills, talents and achievements of young people in Whitehorse.
Engaging young people in conversations about issues that affect them	
5.3	Proactively engage young people on issues relevant to their lives, and encourage and enable young people to have a voice and participate in public discussion.
5.4	Ensure that the voice of young people is valued and respected through community engagement processes.
5.5	Undertake ongoing skills development and training for Council staff in how best to engage young people and capture their views on topical issues.
5.6	Continue to explore new ways of accessing and effectively engaging young people in community engagement activities.
5.7	Encourage businesses and organisations throughout Whitehorse to work proactively engage and work with young people to find positive solutions to perceived differences.
5.8	Create opportunities for young people and older members of the community to interact and exchange ideas, stories, experiences and knowledge.
Creating a city in which all young people feel welcome and secure	
5.9	Proactively promote the City of Whitehorse as a city for all young people, in which they are welcome, accepted and embraced as they are, regardless of age, gender, identity, ethnicity, language, ability and sexual orientation.
5.10	Increase awareness of LGBTIQ[3] among young people and advocate for inclusion of education around LGBTIQ issues into secondary schools.
5.11	Promote and encourage young people to explore, develop and be comfortable with their identity.
5.12	Work in partnership with Box Hill Institute of TAFE, Deakin University and secondary schools throughout Whitehorse to ensure that international students have adequate support in transitioning into life in Australia.
5.13	Work with youth service providers and the Migrant Information Centre to ensure that newly arrived migrants and refugees aged 12-25 years have adequate support to settle in the City of Whitehorse.

[3] LGBTIQ is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer.

Safe, welcoming & inclusive community	
5.14	Promote the importance and value of cultural diversity and encourage harmony and friendship between people of all ethnic backgrounds.
5.15	Create and promote youth-friendly public places and spaces that are suitable and attractive for young people to hang-out and socialise.
Creating a safe community	
5.16	Continue ongoing partnerships between Council, Victoria Police, transport authorities and other key organisations to make the City of Whitehorse a safe place.
5.17	Promote the City of Whitehorse as a safe place to live, work and study.
5.18	In partnership with other service providers and schools, promote safe online behaviour and increase awareness about digital footprint.

APPENDIX A: CHILD FRIENDLY CITIES

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Child Friendly Cities Initiative provides a framework for recognition of local governments for their ongoing efforts towards improvements and demonstrated impacts achieved in the everyday lives of its young citizens.

Child Friendly Cities reflects the fullest implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the local level - where it has the greatest direct impact on children's lives.

A Child Friendly City is actively engaged in fulfilling the right of every young citizen to:

- Influence decisions about their city or community
- Express their opinion about the community they want
- Participate in family, community and social life
- Be an equal citizen of their city
- Have access to every service, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender, disability or special needs
- Actively supports the vulnerable members of their community to engage with civil society and improve their circumstance
- Be protected from exploitation, violence and abuse
- Walk safely in the streets on their own
- Meet friends and play
- Have green spaces for plants and animals
- Live in an unpolluted environment
- Participate in cultural and social events
- Learn about their human rights in schools and community spaces.

Local councils have a direct ability to impact the lives of children in their community. Most importantly, councils can actively foster community awareness and culture which recognises children and young people as equal citizens with rights, voice and an important contribution.

UNICEF Australia is currently piloting Child Friendly Cities Initiative in Australia to develop a best practice model.

Further information about the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities Initiative can be found at www.unicef.org.au